

Attorney Docket No.: **UMD-0092**
Inventors: **Mathews et al.**
Serial No.: **10/505,265**
Filing Date: **April 22, 2005**
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This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A variant An isolated variant protein of wild-type HIV-1 Tat protein comprising an asparagine at amino acid residue 23 and C-terminal amino acid sequence NCYCKKCCFHCQVCFITKALGISYGRKKRRQRRRAHQNSQTHQASLSKQ (SEQ ID NO:4), wherein said variant exhibits higher transcriptional activation and stronger P-TEFb binding than wild-type HIV-1 Tat.

Claims 2-3 (canceled).

Claim 4 (original): A nucleic acid sequence encoding the variant of claim 1.

Claim 5 (original): A vector comprising the nucleic acid sequence of claim 4.

Claim 6 (original): A host cell comprising the vector of claim 5.

Claims 7-12 (canceled).

Claim 13 (original): A fusion protein comprising a selected protein fused to the variant of claim 1.

Claim 14 (canceled).

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Claim 15 (original): A tagged fusion construct comprising the variant of claim 1 fused to a tag for purification of the variant.

Claims 16-19 (canceled).